The Angry Black Girl: Misinformed and Misled

by Antiona Green, 2020 CTI Fellow
(Oakhurst STEAM Academy)

This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Upper elementary math/art/social studies(4th&5th)

Keywords: female, black, african american, girl, magic, poet, poem, poetry, math, beauty,representation,confidence, self-respect, identity

Teaching Standards: See Appendix I for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis: This unit students will explore a variety of art modalities including poems, spoken word, and graphics written by African American females that address historical topics related to black beauty and it's generational roots. Through their research students will be exposed to the complex social dynamics and use math concepts with art to combat the false images of representation. Students will be given the opportunity to share their stories and background through their interpretation of art as a way to foster self identity. This opportunity will encourage community and promote confidence and respect. Jacobs Charlotte E. argues that schools can potentially transform into spaces where Black girls are given the tools to recognize, critique, and push back narratives that oppress and dominate Black girls and women. This curriculum aims to inform all students of systemic discrimination, engage them through hands on learning, and challenge their critical thinking skills through the range of resources related to black girl magic.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 46 students in 4th grade math.

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<center>**The Black Girl: An American Paradigm**</center>

<center>*Antiona Green*</center>

Introduction

Being a part of a group that has been historically neglected, marginalized and underserved, I hold a commitment to maintain accountability of how we as a people, specifically educators, engage with our Black female students. To better serve our young girls, it is our duty to: be mindful of images and identities represented, allow students to share personal perspectives, and provide an education that highlights diverse historical and modern role models. In the Danger of a Single Story TED Talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie she states; It is not that stereotypes are not true, rather they are incomplete. When we reject a single story, we regain a kind of paradise.[1]

I am a fourth grade math teacher at Oakhurst S.T.E.A.M. Academy in Charlotte, North Carolina. Oakhurst STEAM is a Title I magnet school made up of 43.8% African American, 28.3% Hispanic, 18.8% Caucasian, and the other 9.3% being Asian and those of two or more races.[2] Of the faculty and staff, only 24% of teachers are African American. It is necessary to point out that although there is a heavy African American student population, only 24% of teachers are African American. Representation in education matters mainly because you cannot teach what you cannot relate to. Working in a grade that is departmentalized gifts me the pleasure of teaching 46 students, 25% of these students are African American girls looking to feel accepted in a world that equalizes differences and not similarities.

Although I have only been teaching for three years, I have worked with kids for 10 years and it is always saddening to see the young African American girls obsessing over the characteristics of other girls. My third grade Ethiopian student wanted so badly to have white skin with blue eyes and long hair because it was "prettier". I admired this student's honesty, yet very unsettled as she continued to express her feelings of unworthiness. While in that moment, I could only blame society and its 19th century social constructs that still haunt the minds of minorities, both young and old. It is no secret that the U.S. American beauty standards are based on idealized depictions of white women's physical features. Mainstream beauty standards are represented through

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[1] Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story," TED, 2009, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.

[2] Oakhurst STEAM Academy. Accessed June 10, 2020. https://www.greatschools.org/north-carolina/charlotte/11960-Oakhurst-STEAM-Academy/#Students

white models, as well as the majority of Black women portrayed in the media who most often possess Eurocentric features.[3]

It is callous to neglect the role of the sanctioned system of slavery dating back to 1619 paired with the acts of violence against black female bodies including death at the hand of the slave owners. Black women worked tirelessly to provide for white families by cooking, cleaning, and caring for their young children. These women were also perpetual victims of rape by white men and considered no more than a piece of property. Slave owners exploited black women for their skills and physical strength to produce crops while the white males and females made a profit. It is noted in Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family by Jacqueline Jones that, "blacks' efforts on behalf of their own health and welfare often took place in spaces apart from whites, with rhythms more in tune with community and family life...family responsibilities revealed the limited extent to which black women and men could control their own lives.[4]

Understanding the history behind such pessimistic views will help educators develop empathy as well as incorporate culturally responsive teaching into their practice. I find it very important to share personal experiences, whether it be myself or my students. Sharing your story opens up avenues for deeper connections, vulnerability, and has the potential to spark self-discovery. As children grow up self-identity is a critical process, and black girls are involuntarily set back due to the false images of representation. It is my goal to create safe spaces for my black female students, as well as bring attention to the negative and inaccurate marginalization of black girls.

Students will unpack history while developing comprehension skills through analysis of African American artists. As a way to tie in mathematical concepts, students will be tasked with creating a visual representation of themselves through the eyes of an artist studied using geometric shapes. As an extension students will demonstrate their understanding of fractions by identifying parts of the whole used in their illustration. This unit will be taught ½ remote and ½ in person due to covid19 and certain restrictions. All resources will be accessible online as well as paper copies for students to reference. Students will have the opportunity to present their design virtually/in person as a way to celebrate diversity and individuality.

Content Research

Paradigm 1: False Representations of the Black Woman

The term misunderstood is defined as: improperly understood or interpreted;

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[3] Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

[4] Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1985).

not appreciated.[5] As a result of the deeply rooted heritage of slavery and the emergence of new economic, political, and social structure; black women have been burdened with a negative reputation. This reputation suggests that we are loud, rude, aggressive, confrontational, and the list goes on. Historical racial stereotypes that mock the appearance of African American women such as the Mammy, Sapphire, and Jezzebel played a huge role in the attitudes of white men and women. According to the dictionary, to be mislead is to lead or guide wrongly; lead astray; to lead into error of conduct, thought, or judgment.[6] These assumptions shape the social world that black women must accommodate or resist in an effort to preserve their authentic selves and to secure recognition as citizens.[7]

Your perception shapes your own reality; this means your perception influences how you process, interpret, and act on this reality. How African American women feel about their lives and circumstances depends on the meaning they give to them, but these meanings are often socially constructed. For example, the Mammy is seen as the large, independent woman who represented a maternal figure whose love, advice, correction, and supervision were exclusive to white women and children. Jezzebel represents the undeniable sexual side of the African American women. In the past, black women were seen as physiologically and anatomically different which is evidenced in London where a Khoikhoi was showcased in an exhibit for her large buttox and elongated labia, deemed abnormal. Sapphire is a "cultural shorthand" for the angry black woman stigma.[8] All of the stereotypes continue to haunt black women of today, regardless of economic, political, or social status.

Jezebel: The Promiscuous Black Woman

The sexualized view of black women like much of societies views, can date back to the slavery era. Slaves, whether on the auction block or offered privately for sale, were often stripped naked and physically examined. In theory, this was done to insure that they were healthy, able to reproduce. Slave owners forced the women to have sex that claimed to be consented. The Jezebel stereotype is both racial and gender driven. Black women were believed to possess a strong natural libido and sexually aggressive and manipulative which contrasts with images of White plantation women as virtuous, pious, self-sacrificing mothers, whose sexuality was tied almost entirely to maternity.[9] How can this sexualized idea both idolize and disparage black women?

Mammy: The Matriarch

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[5] "Misunderstood," Dictionary.com (Dictionary.com, 2012), https://www.dictionary.com/browse/misunderstood.

[6] "Mislead," Dictionary.com (Dictionary.com, 2012), https://www.dictionary.com/browse/misled?s=t.

[7] Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

[8] "Anger: The Black Woman's 'Superpower'," NPR (NPR, May 15, 2019), https://www.npr.org/transcripts/723322372.

[9] Johanna M. Collier, Matthew J. Taylor, and Zoe D. Peterson, "Reexamining the 'Jezebel' Stereotype: The Role of Implicit and Psychosexual Attitudes," *The Western Journal of Black Studies* 41, no. 3-4 (2017).

The Mammy embodiment is quite the opposite of Jezebel. American films, pancake boxes, and syrup bottles imprinted Mammy on the American psyches more indelibly than before. The Black Mammy Memorial in Mississippi, backed with resources from the state and private investors, represents the dependence of white supremacy on black women's faithful service to the white households.[10] This image ultimately sought to legitimize the institution of slavery. After the Civil War and into the 1900s the Mammy grew increasingly popular as her robust, grinning likeness was attached to mass-produced consumer goods from flour to motor oil.[11] Rather than being seen as possessing human qualities; compassionate, supportive, and self-sufficient. Black women are set apart from the majority, thus alienating them.

Sapphire: The Aggressive and Angry Black Woman

The Sapphire stereotype earned its name on the CBS television show "Amos 'n' Andy," in association with the character Sapphire Stevens.[12] Too often black women are shunned for exhibiting qualities that are often associated with white men and women. Could this label be a defense mechanism for those outside of the black race? A person's unconscious bias may continue the habitual angry black woman stereotype. A lack of understanding and awareness of the experiences of different marginalized groups only further widens the perceived gap. Black women now hold a job to immobilize the cycle of misunderstanding that is very present in society today. This practice of widespread cultural projection reveals what is so dangerous about the "Angry Black Woman"stereotype: it holds the Black woman responsible for power they do not possess, power that is, in fact, being utilized in very real ways by members of other social groups who claim emotional innocence as they hide behind, and persecute, the "Black Bitches" of our cultural imagination.[13]

Present Day Caricature

Although Jezebel Mammy, and Sapphire were stereotypes of a different time, these crude ideas still exist today. In today's films you may find heavy set Black women with roles as the cook or the motherly figure. Black women are often singled out based on their clothes and sexualized because of their figure. Stereotypes about African American girls, such as the Sapphire, Jezebel, and Mammy, are reflective of the ways that society at large has exploited and pathologized their sexuality and intellect. It is important to note that individuals who believe a certain stereotype generally look for

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[10] Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

[11] Melissa V. Harris-Perry.

[12] "Anger: The Black Woman's 'Superpower'," NPR (NPR, May 15, 2019), https://www.npr.org/transcripts/723322372.

[13] Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

information that supports their stereotype.[14] As a black woman and educator, I stress the importance of transcending the limits of the oversimplified image so that we can collectively see the black female as she is and not who she is thought to be.

The "othered" status of Black girls is typically present in the media that they regularly consume. Images of "Rachet women," "Baby Mamas," and "Black Barbies" are ever-present in the various forms of media that flood the screens depicting Black girls and women as hypersexual, emotionally unstable, and uneducated in comparison to the positive images of White girls and women seen in magazines, movies, and television shows.[15] For students I will use the well known barbie doll test that tests the degree of marginalization felt by African Americans. This test includes clips of children from all backgrounds choosing what they view to be more acceptable. Maya Angelou's world famous poem "Phenomenal Women" addresses the bleak picture painted by society and creates a new definition by admiring the beauty and self confidence of a woman.

Paradigm 2: The Strong Black Woman

Society appears to have conflicting ideas about black women. How can we be such incapable domineering beings, yet nurturing and glorified for strength and resilience. Black women have fallen prey to this "superwoman schema" that can be both a blessing and a curse. The superwoman schema includes five elements: feeling an obligation to present an image of strength, feeling an obligation to suppress emotions, resistance to being vulnerable, a drive to succeed despite limited resources, and feeling an obligation to help others.[16] These five elements fuel the constant contention between how we as black women see ourselves and how the world sees us. Because of the many stereotypes toward black women, we are deprived of the right to feel as a valid response to unequal circumstances. Black women's passion and commitment are often misread and irrational.

Such notions can be seen in the education and healthcare system. Nationally, in schools, Black girls are criminalized more frequently.[17] A 2014 report from Columbia Law School's Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies and African American Policy Forum found they are six times more likely to face out-of-class suspensions for the same infractions their white peers commit.[18] Black women have the highest maternal mortality rates, dying 2.5 times more than white women in 2018. The strong black woman stereotype has become a mantle that the nation, including black

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[14] David Pilgrim, "The Jezebel Stereotype," The Jezebel Stereotype - Anti-black Imagery - Jim Crow Museum - Ferris State University (Ferris State University, 2002), https://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/jezebel/.

[15] David Pilgrim.

[16] Petiri Ira, Why We Need To Stop The "Strong Black Woman" Trope, It Is Not A Compliment., accessed September 23, 2020, https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/why-we-need-to-stop-the-strong-black-woman-trope-it-is-not-a-compliment-c0b57a052c05.

[17] Ruth Etiesit Samuel, "Toyin, Breonna and All Black Women Deserve Better," Teen Vogue, 2020, https://www.teenvogue.com/story/strong-black-woman-stereotype-oped.

[18] Ruth Etiesit Samuel.

communities, expect African American women to assume. Sister Shame states, to protect against always being seen as inferior, they declare themselves uniquely capable, but this strength is a shield full of holes; it sets up new possibilities for being misrecognized.[19]

Expressed in the paragraph above, statistics show even young black girls are victims to the "strong black woman" stereotype. I personally have witnessed unfair suspensions and infractions to young black girls who may have lost their temper in an attempt to defend themselves. This is not to ignore the lack of control over emotions, rather to point out what the result may have been had it been a student of another color. "Caged Bird" by Maya Angelou describes an extended metaphor of emotional suffering as well as the disparity between freedom and captivity. Referring back to the TED Talk "Danger of a Single Story", she expressed focusing on a single story flattens the experience and overlooks the stories that formed who a person is. To dispossess a people tell the story and start with secondly.[20]

Paradigm 3: The Angry Black Woman: Misinformed and Misled

A group of black women from New York described themselves as kind, giving, and tender. When friends were posed the same question about the group of black women, their answers were much different. The New York women realized that others saw them considerably harsher, sassier, and more aggressive than they see themselves.[21] It can be difficult to manage the disconnect between self and others' perception. It is noted that even therapists tend to view African American women women as anxious or phobic while perceiving white women who describe similar emotions and behaviors as sad and depressed. This belief strips away black women's right to feel emotion.

Kiara Jean stated in an interview, "When I was fighting, it just made me feel like, oh, I'm tough. So now everybody want to be my friend. So like, I became a crash dummy in some way because I wasn't fighting for myself. I mostly was fighting because I wanted to be loved. I wanted to be accepted because I know without fighting, what was I? Just that fat girl."[22] Evident in Kiara's interview statement, in an attempt to be seen black girls feel the need to act out of character. To fight back is to prove your significance within a community. Because active resistance in service of survival has been an integral part of the Black woman's lived experience within this society, Black women

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[19] Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

[20] Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, "The Danger of a Single Story," TED, 2009, https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story.

[21] Melissa V. Harris-Perry, *Sister Citizen Shame, Stereotypes, and Black Women in America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

[22] "New Documentary Examines How Black Girls Are Disproportionately Punished In Schools," NPR (NPR, March 14, 2020), https://www.npr.org/2020/03/14/815778434/new-documentary-examines-how-black-girls-are-disproportionately-punished-in-scho.

become easy hosts or objects of the unwanted aggressive projections of others. When those holding negative, rigid relational images of Black women also control the larger systems of social power, a reinforcing cycle of Black women's oppression is created that becomes a part of a Black woman's lived experience.[23]

In education, Black girls need protection from school criminalization. Samaya stated in an interview, "Everything I did was just like the slightest bit of me doing something wrong - like a normal 7-year-old would do, like getting up or on - actually speaking without being called on. That would just result in me getting into big trouble. And that was just - there was nothing I could do."[24] It is also equally important to address the 6

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[23] Grayman-Simpson, Nyasha. (2005). Sapphire: Exploring The Power Of A Popular Stereotype. 39. 10-13.

[24] "New Documentary Examines How Black Girls Are Disproportionately Punished In Schools," NPR (NPR, March 14, 2020), https://www.npr.org/2020/03/14/815778434/new-documentary-examines-how-black-girls-are-disproportionately-punished-in-scho.

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Mandaville, Erik. "Home: ERIK MANDAVILLE, ECMS ART." ECMS Visual Art, 2018. https://emandaville.wixsite.com/website.

year old kindergartener who was handcuffed for throwing a temper tantrum. Teacher biases play a role in the decision making. The attempts to resolve these issues are often punitive rather than rehabilitative. Elementary and middle school students, especially, are in their formative developmental stages and need all of the support they can get to grow and become healthy adults. These statistics greatly reinforce my goal to create safe spaces for black girls in my classroom. To create these spaces it is the duty of school districts to hold frequent self-critiques of their teaching to evaluate how their pedagogical decisions more substantively promote critical thinking and critical consciousness among Black girls in schools.

Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

Project Based Learning: This approach is student centered and allows students to investigate and respond to a question, challenge, or problem. Students will be given the opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their thinking. Through readings, and other

"Mislead." Dictionary.com. Dictionary.com, 2012. https://www.dictionary.com/browse/misled?s=t.

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"New Documentary Examines How Black Girls Are Disproportionately Punished In Schools." NPR. NPR, March 14, 2020. https://www.npr.org/2020/03/14/815778434/new-documentary-examines-how-black-girls-are-disproportionately-punished-in-scho.

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research students will work to discuss and gather information needed for their end project.

Cooperative Learning: During the first week students will work in small groups for most of the lesson in order to dissect a text assigned to them. This strategy promotes peer interaction and community as they work together to reach a common goal. Students are expected to develop and follow group norms.

Strategy Groupings/Differentiation: In order to meet individual student needs the content included in this lesson will be differentiated based on student's instructional levels. Videos and other graphics are included to cater to visual learners and those with reading constraints. In order to maintain interest and student engagement, I will provide students with choices on how they choose to create and present their final projects. Although much of their work will be in their ability groups, there will be other opportunities for students to share their insight with other classmates.

Inquiry Circles: Inquiry circles allow for purposeful dialogue in order to extend and enhance comprehension of a topic. Students rely on multiple perspectives to navigate texts and gather information.

Discussion: In order to reap the benefits of this curriculum, intentional discussion must take place. Engaging student discussions creates a culture of listeners, speakers, and learners. Rather than simply convey information to students, the responsibility is of the student to analyze and process information in order to articulate their thoughts.

Technology: Technology keeps students engaged and ensures they have the necessary skills for 21st century learning. These lessons will be taught 50% in person, 50% virtually. All resources will be available as hard copies or digitally. This curriculum is reading intensive and use of technology also provides great support for struggling learners and ELL's.

Read Alouds/ Mentor Texts/Visuals: Aside from promoting reading literacy, read alouds/mentor texts/visuals serve as an anchor text which helps students to make powerful connections to their own lives & initiates meaningful classroom discussions. The main theme of this curriculum is identity & creating a safe space. Through the use of purposeful mentor texts, students will likely see themselves. As students listen and participate in discussions, this instills exceptional writing skills & prepares them for texts they will analyze within their small groups. Examples of models/artists I will include are:

- *Danger of a Single Story* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
- *Caged Bird* by Maya Angelou
- *Still I Rise* by Maya Angelou
- *Your Silence Will Not Protect You* by Audre Lorde
- *Moon Masque* by Lois Mailou Jones
- *Thornbush Blues Totem* by John Scott

- *Red Stripe with Green Background* by Felrath Hines
- *Baby Doll Experiment* by Margeret Beale Spencer
- *NJTV News clip*

Graphic Organizers: Being that this project requires an extensive amount of research, students need the necessary tools to organize and simplify information. Their "notecatchers" will aid in the development of critical thinking and higher order thinking skills. Graphic organizers through this curriculum will help build comprehension through making connections (text to world, text to self). Being that this curriculum will intertwine different subtopics, a story map format will be most useful. Story maps discuss significant elements of a story that include characters, plot, setting, problem, etc.

Self Reflection: This strategy encourages students to reflect on their learning experience. Reflection will take place through journaling, mindfulness activities, discussions, and questioning.

SEL (Social and Emotional Learning): Through social and emotional learning students learn to develop self awareness, self control, and interpersonal skills that are vital to function at home, in school, and life in general. The journal entries and continuous reflective activities will promote this social and emotional learning and empower students to cope with their feelings, set goals, and make decisions.

Classroom Lessons/Activities

Week 1: Reflect and Research

Day One

Objective: In this lesson, students will describe aspects of their identities such as race, gender, ability, religion and more. Students will be able to analyze how people's identities are represented.

Essential Questions
- What makes me who I am?
- How are other people similar to and different from me?

Background Knowledge/Connection: Review vocabulary related to topic. A premade anchor chart ([See Appendix IV](#)) with different identity characteristics should be displayed. Lead a discussion on what students think the words represent? Many students may give answers such as: What a person likes, what a person does, a person's beliefs, etc.. All of which are correct, however the goal is for them to understand the theme of identity. Identity makes up all of the things about a person. As a lesson opener, prompt students to brainstorm words that identify their favorite public figure. Highlight stereotypes and caution against

making assumptions or judging people based on a single characteristic. For instance, being a girl doesn't necessarily mean you like to play with dolls; being a boy doesn't necessarily mean you like to play sports.

Teaching Point: Show the news clip "11-Year-Old Marley Dias Creates Change Through #1000BlackGirlBooks Campaign" (See Appendix II). After watching ask guiding questions: What is the goal or purpose of Marley's campaign? What were some of the identities that she looked for in books she chose? Why is it important to read about people that have identities different from our own?

Active Engagement: Students will participate in a gallery walk. During this gallery walk, students will pair identity characteristics with the different art forms presented. The gallery walk will establish a foundation for future activities leading up to their culminating project.

Closing/Assessment: After pairing them together, we will have a class discussion on why certain labels were chosen. Encourage students to think about what they took into consideration when labeling the art. Was it related to color? Shape?

Day Two

Objective: Students will be able to make text-to-self and text-to-text connections. Students are encouraged to think and talk openly about the concept of beauty, particularly as it overlaps with issues of race and racial identity.

Essential Questions: What explicit and hidden messages about race do authors and illustrators send to readers? What obvious and hidden messages about beauty do authors and illustrators send to readers? Are these ideas relevant today?

Background Knowledge/Connection: Review conversation from lesson opener the day before. Review new vocab. (perspective) As a warm up, have students reflect on themselves. Pose the question " Who are you?" Students should write down any words/characteristics that identify themselves. As a teacher, you know that there is often a difference between the students' perceptions of their ability, and the reality of the situation, so teachers have to guide students through reflection carefully at first. Remind students that it is okay if they are not able to fill up a page or only have a few. We are always learning new things about ourselves.

Teaching Point: Present students with a perspective image (See Appendix III) Begin discussing what students see? There will most likely be a variety of answers. After discussion talk about the importance of perspectives and how sometimes we see things differently and it doesn't necessarily mean one person is right or wrong. Watch the baby doll experiment to introduce students to the concept of beauty as it relates to race and identity. Be sure to highlight the psychologists who conducted these experiments to study the psychological effects of segregation on African American children. It also helped the case of Brown vs. Board of Education. This experiment tests children's racial perception.

Active Engagement: During this time students will have time to browse through a set of picture books & portraits. Their task is to record anything they notice about the illustrations. They should try to make at least 3 connections (text to text, text to self, text to world). If students are not familiar with this approach, briefly explain. Text to text refers to making connections between two different texts. Text to self has to do with connections between a text and the student. Text to world includes how a text relates to the world. Observations will be recorded in their notecatcher. I will check in to help guide thinking for students who need extra support.

Closing/Assessment: After students have been given time to make and record observations, have students come together to discuss. During this discussion it is important to remain sensitive and aware of students and their different backgrounds or experiences that play a part in how they see race. This conversation may become uncomfortable, but if a positive classroom community has been established then this can be a great opportunity to delve deeper into the topic and address stereotypes and race as its core. (a social construct) Students must understand that literature also plays a role in the different stereotypes that are associated with race.

Day Three

Objective: Students will be able to make text-to-self and text-to-text connections. Students are encouraged to think and talk openly about the issues of race and racial identity.

Essential Questions: Is there a standard criteria for someone's identity? How can we determine this? What are the determining factors?

Background Knowledge/Connection: Review lessons from days before. Reminder that identity is the major theme of this curriculum. Students wrote down how they saw themselves.. Over the next two days they will begin thinking of other viewpoints. Open with another journaling exercise that answers the question "How do you think your family views you?" This can be based on what they have told the student or how they may be treated by those in their family.

Teaching Point: Students will participate in a portrait identity activity. Based on an assigned picture, students will work with a partner to complete a table. This table includes details about the person (gender, ethnicity, race, job, language, etc..) After completing the table, I will read a short paragraph that matches the different portraits. Students will discuss: Did the story match you and your partner's choices? What were the determining factors? Were there any assumptions made? What did you learn from the stories?

Active Engagement: Students will begin their group work. These groups will stay the same for the following 3 days. Based on their group. students will be assigned a text/video/portrait ([See Appendix II](#)) ([See Appendix III](#)) to analyze. A notecatcher ([See Appendix V](#)) will be provided to record what they notice and what they wonder.

Closing/Assessment: Class will come back together and each group will share one notice and wonderings from what they were assigned.

Day Four

Objective: Students will be able to make text-to-self and text-to-text connections. Students are encouraged to think and talk openly about the issues of race and racial identity.

Essential Questions: Is there a standard criteria for someone's identity? How can we determine this? What are the determining factors?

Background Knowledge/Connection: Review lessons from days before. Reminder that identity is the major theme of this curriculum. The last two lessons consisted of students identifying how they and their family saw themselves. Today they will focus on how their friends and other people view them. Again, this can be based on how they are treated or things that have been said previously. Prompt journal prompt: "How do those other than your family see you?"

Teaching Point: As students journal and continue to analyze different forms of literature, they will begin to learn more about themselves and those around them. Related to the exercise from the previous day, students will complete a table that they feel matches their identity. As a scaffold, students can use sentence starters so that they can more easily complete the table. To save time, students will only complete five lines with sentence starters " I can, I am, I believe, I like, I will" This activity encourages deep thinking.

Active Engagement: Group work day 2. Students are to work on their assigned text/video/portrait (See Appendix II) (See Appendix III) to analyze. Use notecatcher to record what they notice and what they wonder.

Closing/Assessment: Class will come back together and each group will share one notice and wondering from what they were assigned.

Day Five

Objective: Students will be able to make text-to-self and text-to-text connections. Students are encouraged to think and talk openly about the issues of race and racial identity.

Essential Questions: Is there a standard criteria for someone's identity? How can we determine this? What are the determining factors?

Background Knowledge/ Connection: Review lessons from previous lessons.

Teaching Point: The purpose of the first set of lessons is to convey to students that everyone has multiple identities. Peoples' identities are similar in some ways and different in others. As a teaching point, students will complete a Fact/Fiction exercise. They will highlight similarities and differences between how others see them and how they see themselves?

Why might there be differences? I will use a clip from the TED Talk by Chimamanda Adichia (See Appendix II) to guide the discussion.

Active Engagement: Group work day 3. Students will get to choose their text/video/portrait (See Appendix II) (See Appendix III) to analyze. (Note that they should be given choices within their instructional levels) Use notecatcher to record what they notice and what they wonder.

Closing/Assessment: Class will come back together and each group will share one notice and wondering from what they were assigned.

Week 2: Application

Day One

Objective: Students will reevaluate their perspective of their identity as related to race, gender, race, religion, values, etc.. Students will begin brainstorming for their project based on criteria.

Essential Questions: Is identity fluid, or not fixed? What geometric shapes and angles can I put together to represent me?

Background Knowledge/ Connection: Review information gathered in small groups. Allow students to share things they have discovered throughout their research. Students will complete their final journaling exercise: Who am I? After giving students time to answer this question, have students reflect on their answer previously to now. Has anything changed? Did it change based on their definition? Did they discover more things about themselves? If it did not change, why could this be? This should be very reflective and encourage self awareness.

Teaching Point: Show students a gallery of geometric portraits from a variety of artists (See Appendix III) Students are to choose ONE portrait that they feel would best suit them. Students should also pay attention to the different shapes they see. Can they identify them? Before allowing students to pick, model for them. Explain that they might choose a portrait based on its rigidness or dark/bright colors. Students may choose a shape based on a shape that resembles an object/hobby/etc.. The purpose is to be creative and think outside of the box. Once students have been given time to choose a portrait, they may choose to share which portrait they chose and why. Be sure that this is not required, but an option for those who feel comfortable. Review project criteria with students. Show a model that has been previously created, preferably by the teacher.. A visual gives students a base.

Active Engagement: Students will now work to brainstorm using a graphic organizer (See Appendix V) What shapes will they include? What types of colors would be useful? Any special angles? Any objects that could be in the form of many shapes together? Canva or

paper copy? All of these things should be considered when planning their project. During this time I will be checking in with students who may need extra support.

Closing/Assessment: Allow students who are comfortable to share one thing they have brainstormed. This can also give other students ideas who may be stuck.

Day Two

Objective: Students will use the knowledge gained about self and others to create a magazine cover of the best representation of themselves using geometric shapes and colors based on the criteria.

Essential Questions: How can I translate my identity into a visual?

Background Knowledge/Connections: Review project criteria. Use this time to give students an opportunity to ask general questions that may benefit the class.

Teaching Point: Share model once more with students. Be explicit in how the model falls under the criteria.

Active Engagement: Students will work on their magazine covers on Canva or using their choice of art supplies. I will check in with students individually to give warranted feedback, provide suggestions, or help as needed.

Closing/Assessment: Remind students they have two more days to complete their project (unless extra time is allotted).

Day Three

Objective: Students will use the knowledge gained about self and others to create a magazine cover of the best representation of themselves using geometric shapes and colors based on the criteria.

Essential Questions: How can I translate my identity into a visual?

Background Knowledge/Connections: Review project criteria. Use this time to give students an opportunity to ask general questions that may benefit the class.

Teaching Point: Display model in a visible space where students can refer back to.

Active Engagement: Students will work on their magazine covers on Canva or using their choice of art supplies. I will check in with students individually to give warranted feedback, provide suggestions, or help as needed.

Closing/Assessment: Remind students they have two more days to complete their project (unless extra time is allotted).

Day Four

Objective: Students will use the knowledge gained about self and others to create a magazine cover of the best representation of themselves using geometric shapes and colors based on the criteria.

Essential Questions: How can I translate my identity into a visual?

Background Knowledge/Connections: Review project criteria. Use this time to give students an opportunity to ask general questions that may benefit the class.

Teaching Point: Display model in a visible space where students can refer back to.

Active Engagement: Students will work on their magazine covers on Canva or using their choice of art supplies. I will check in with students individually to give warranted feedback, provide suggestions, or help as needed.

Closing/Assessment: Remind students they have two more days to complete their project (unless extra time is allotted).

Day Five

Objective: Students will use the knowledge gained about self and others to create a magazine cover of the best representation of themselves using geometric shapes and colors based on the criteria.

Essential Questions: How can I translate my identity into a visual?

Background Knowledge/Connections:

Teaching Point: Explain how students will present their work. This will be in the format of a gallery walk (or an exhibit). Students will stand by their creations or have them pulled up on their chromebooks. ½ of students will stand and share, while the others view. (Students will be able to give a 1:30 dialogue of how their portrait represents them) Students will then swap roles. This ensures students have a chance to see all projects. If this is not feasible, teachers have discretion on the format of presentations.

Active Engagement: Students will share portraits.

Closing/Assessment: Allow students to display their work in a space in the classroom or bulletin board. Wrap up the project with a journal entry: students will answer: How has this curriculum unit made me feel? Why has it made me feel this way? How can I be more aware of the stereotypes attached to those of a certain race or gender?

Assessments:

Informal: Throughout this unit students will participate in many discussions. From the discussions. I will make mental notes of students and their understanding of the different topics and subtopics. Students will complete a series of graphic organizers as a way to keep track of their research.

Formal: Based on the provided rubric (see below) students will create a magazine that is a visual representation of them using geometric shapes and angles. The rubric addresses math standards as it relates to geometry and themes related to social emotional exercises we have explored in class.

Rubric

Category	Developing (1-3 pts.)	Mastery (4-6 pts.)	Exemplary Mastery (7-10pts.)
Geometric Shapes	Student included less than 5 types of geometric shapes overall.	Student included at least 5 types of geometric shapes overall.	Student included more than 5 types of geometric shapes overall.
Elements of Identity	Student did not include any elements of identity in visual presentation.	Student included a elements of identity in visual representation.	Student included various elements of identity
Authenticity	Visual representation shows no authenticity.	Visual representation shows originality and creativity.	Visual representation is unique to the student and shows true originality.
Overall Presentation	Presentation is poorly organized/designed.	Presentation is organized and visually appealing in terms of design, layout, and neatness.	Presentation is presented in a thought provoking way and exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.
			/40 points possible

Appendix I: Teaching Standards:

4.G.1.3 Exemplify the interactions of various peoples, places and cultures in terms of adaptation and modification of the environment.

As students explore the theme of identity throughout the unit, they will come to understand how different identities are influenced by the environment. Social life is structured in a way that can determine a person's culture, or way of life. Culture is one of the many elements of identity that shape a person's identity including their values and attitudes.

RL.4.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.

Students will work heavily with the themes related to identity, belonging, social justice, and beauty through the analysis of poems, graphics, and videos.

RL.4.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including words that affect meaning and tone.

Students will work closely with poems to determine their meaning or hidden messages.

RL.4.5 Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems and drama when writing or speaking about a text.

During the research period students will spend time reflecting on the poems they have read and analyzed with their group.

RI.4.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears

As part of their culminating project, students must create a visual representation of themselves that relate to the theme of identity. Along with the visual representation, students will have a dialogue they will use during the gallery walk.

NC.4.G.1 Draw and identify points, lines, line segments, rays, angles, and perpendicular and parallel lines

In order to create their final project students must work to manipulate angels and lines to make a shape that represents who they are.

NC.4.G.2 Classify quadrilaterals and triangles based on angle measure, side lengths, and the presence or absence of parallel or perpendicular lines.

As stated in the criteria, students must include at least 5 types of geometric shapes in their visual.

Appendix II: Video Resources

Below are resources that students will use to steer discussions/ meaningful conversations with classmates.

[“11-Year-Old Marley Dias Creates Change Through #1000BlackGirlBooks Campaign” video](#)

[Danger of a single story TED Talk](#)

[Babydoll Experiment](#)

Appendix III: Mentor Texts/Graphics

The included texts and graphics serve as models and encourage students to make connections.

[Moon Masque Painting](#)

[Red Stripe with Green Background Painting](#)

[Thornbush Blues Totem art](#)

[Lois Mallou Jones painting](#)

[Abstract Painting](#)

[My Wife and My Mother - In- Law perspective](#)

[Still I Rise poem](#)

[Caged Bird poem](#)
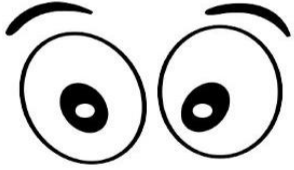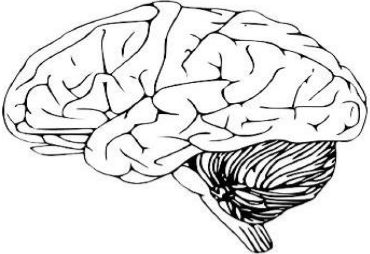
Appendix IV: Anchor Chart

The anchor chart will serve as an icebreaker for the upcoming unit. Students will begin thinking of identity as a group of things, and not fixed.
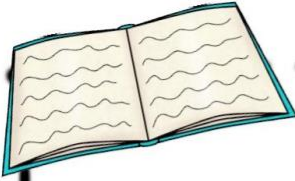
Appendix V: Graphic Organizers

The included graphic organizers help students to visualize and construct ideas based on content research.

See, Think, Wonder

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🧠	
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Name: _____ Date: _____

Analyzing Poetry

Poem Title: _____

Poet's Name: _____

Read the poem and record evidence of the poem's structure, language, theme, and mood.

Structure (verse, line, stanza, meter, rhyme pattern, repeated lines, etc.)

Language (personification, simile, metaphor, alliteration, rhyming sounds, etc.)

Theme (The author's message or main point)

Mood (Feelings/Emotions of the poem)

Example

Race	
Gender	
Religion	
Culture	
Language	
Job	
Hobbies	

Race	
Gender	
Religion	
Culture	
Language	
Job	
Hobbies	

PERCEPTION PICTURE

First published as "My wife and My Mother-in-Law" in Puck, 1915.
Designed by the American Psychologist E. G. Boring.

© 2002 ODE/OCDRCM   What Do You See?   O-50

Materials List:

Desktop

Student chromebooks/ipads
Projector
Anchor chart paper
Mentor texts
Copies of paintings
Copies of illustrations
Copies of Notecatchers
Pencils
Construction Paper
Scissors
Glue

Student Resources:

Sora Reading App for kids- This free digital app offers a wide variety of material for students: audio, ebooks, and digital content. Having access to this app gives students the opportunity to browse books on a larger scale than just those included in the classroom/school library. It is especially useful for the lesson on day 2 where students will have the opportunity to browse different picture books on hand.

https://www.optics4kids.org/illusions is a great website for students to explore optical illusions. These illusions work to challenge student's perception of what is real. Their interpretations relate to the theme of the curriculum, including how they see themselves and the world around them.

Teacher Resources:

https://pushoutfilm.com/film#:~:text=About%20the%20Film,in%20girls'%20lives%20%E2%80%93%20education.
For a curriculum that so heavily focuses on racial/gender equality, it is important for educators to educate themselves on the inequalities faced in the education system. In the film, girls from the ages of 7 to 19 share their stories and how they navigate through a society that tend to marginalize and dismiss them.

Notes